



Bloodied Rivers of Kashmir

Our memories define our history

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Muslims remember 1947 Jammu massacre

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People here in Indian-controlled Kashmir commemorated the Jammu martyrs' day. The day marks the massacre of hundreds and thousands of Muslims against the backdrop of the bloodied partition of the erstwhile British India in 1947.

At a seminar organised by Hurriyat Conference, the conglomerate of pro-freedom groups, in Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar, the speakers paid glowing tributes to those brutally massacred some 66 years ago.

Around 300,000 Muslims, including women and children, were slaughtered on November 06, 1947 while migrating to the newly formed state Pakistan.

Observers say the carnage was organised and orchestrated by Hindu extremist groups led by the then Hindu ruler of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, to prevent people from acceding to Pakistan. The massacre took place near Jammu-Sialkote border.

Every year, people across Indian controlled Kashmir get together to remember the sacrifices rendered by Jammu Muslims on this day and organise seminars and conferences to pay tributes to them.

In one of the least known genocides in modern history, more than 300,000 Muslims were mowed down in cold blooded fashion. For the people in Kashmir, the day is part of a collective memory of oppression and resistance and serves as a reminder of struggles ahead.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/11/06/333364/muslims-remember-1947-jammu-massacre/>
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GENOCIDE, JAMMU

Was Jammu Massacre Planned?

NOVEMBER 6, 2013 | AL SHAHEED | GENOCIDE, HOLOCAUST, JAMMU | LEAVE A COMMENT

Millions of people were brutally killed by communal mobs under the tutelage of erstwhile Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in the winter capital in the months of October and November in 1947, but, one of the biggest genocide and ethnic cleansing in the contemporary times hardly finds a mentions in the pages of history.

Each year, India— ‘the world’s largest democracy’— commemorates, April 1919, Jallianwalla Bagh massacre in which British army’s Brigadier General Reginald EH Dyer fired over crowd for nearly ten minutes and killed hundreds and left thousands injured, but why has been a large scale genocide and ethnic cleansing of Jammu Muslims been pushed under the rugs of oblivion?

The gory event being systematically erased from the pages of history has made it difficult to trace the bloodbath. Questions about the systematic killings at a mass level and the hidden hands to change Jammu’s demography even after 65 years seek clear answers.

Documents unravel that the events of time in Jammu that changed fate of millions received least reportage. Was the authoritarian Maharaja working under a plan and did he impose a blanket ban on noting down the gory events? Perhaps one would never know the details, but has been chronicled is: Around 500,000 Muslims were killed with military precision in Jammu in the months of October and November. (“Prejudice in Paradise”, communalism combat, Anuradha Bhasin Jamwal, 2005. <http://www.indianet.nl/indpk146.html> (<http://www.indianet.nl/indpk146.html>))

Such was the intensity of this carnage in the province that about 123 villages were ‘completely depopulated’.

While the decrease in the number of Muslims in Jammu district alone was over 100,000. Thousands of Gujjars were massacred in local mohallas and the villages within Jammu cantonment area were completely burnt down. Kuthua almost ‘lost’ fifty per cent of its Muslim population.

The Muslims numbered 158,630 and comprised 37 per cent of the total population of 428,719 in the year 1941, and in the year 1961, they numbered only 51,690 and comprised only 10 per cent of the total population of 516,932.

The Dogra state troops were at the forefront of attacks on Muslims. The state authorities were also issuing arms not only to local volunteer organizations (RSS) but to those in surrounding East Punjab districts such as Gurdaspur.

“The Hindus and Sikhs of Jammu and those who had gone there from outside (referring to RSS from Gurdaspur and surrounding areas) killed Muslims there. Their women have been dishonored. This has not been fully reported in the newspapers. The Maharaja of Kashmir is responsible for what has happened there.” (Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, volume 90, page 115 and 298).

The state administration had not only demobilised a large number of Muslim soldiers serving in the state army, but Muslim police officers had also been sent home.

The idea was to create a Hindu majority in the Jammu region. Eighteen per cent fall in Muslim population in the region from Census 1941 to 1961 was noted after Muslims were butchered.

Names of the places were immediately erased to conform to new ownership. Urdu Bazar became Rajinder Bazar and Islamia School became Hari Singh High School. Almost 95 per cent of left-over properties which should have in the normal course been taken over by the state government were given to looters and rioters (Daily Telegraph of London dated 12 January 1948). These properties continue to be under the illegal occupation of looters and their descendants.

Out of a total of 8 lakhs Muslims who tried to migrate, more than “237,000 were systematically exterminated by all the forces of the Dogra state, headed by the Maharaja in person and aided by Hindus and Sikhs.” (“The Master and the Maharajas: The Sikh Princes and the East Punjab Massacres of 1947,” Ian Copland).

Local media too perpetuated in intensifying the killings and exodus. For example, a Jammu-based Hindu paper boasted that ‘a Dogra can kill at least two hundred Muslims’ which illustrated the communal level to which the media and parties had sunk.

Then emergency administrator, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah too conceded genocide and ethnic cleansing in his speech two weeks later at Jammu. But he put the blame on victims and said: “Jammu Muslims are to be large extent themselves responsible for what has happened to them, because though in a minority, they had, by their words and deeds, let their tongues in favour of Pakistan.”(The Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir p. 332, P N Bazaz).

However, in Sheikh Abdullah’s autobiography, Atish-e-Chinar (page 312), he writes that the carnage received an impetus after the arrival of Union Home Minister Sardar Patel, Union Defence Minister Baldev Singh along with the Maharaja of Patiala, a person known for his anti-Muslim bias, in Jammu. The trio had met various Hindu organizations and delegations, after which the massacre attained a great momentum. Fanatics, aided and abetted by government forces, started burning down village after village inhabited by Muslims. Women were abducted, raped at will.

Even the daughter of the Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas, the front-runner political figure, was not spared. Many women preferred death than falling prey. “His family suffered in all possible ways during ethnic cleansing of Jammu. Several of his sisters and brother were killed. His family members were specifically targeted because of his proximity to Muslim League. His youngest daughter was recovered from an Indian Army camp after the massacre of Jammu Muslims.” (Sheikh Showkat Hussain, “19 Profiles”).

GK Reddy, an editor of the Kashmir Times in a statement published in the daily Nawa-i-Waqt wrote: “I saw the armed mob with the complicity of Dogra troops killing the Muslims ruthlessly. The state officials were openly giving out weapons to the mob.”

Ironically, explanations of the violence –both in India and Pakistan – always have portrayed the killing as erratic and spontaneous, many with the aim of ‘blame displacement’. Each country floated the subsequent course of violence as a ‘reaction’ to the ‘action’ and in many cases as ‘self-defence’. But the execution of Jammu Muslims breaks the meta-narrative created around the communal killings during partition.

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<http://www.kashmirdispatch.com/blog/061118549-was-jammu-massacre-planned.htm>
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GENOCIDE, JAMMU

Jammu Genocide Recorded

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“I should like to say here that certain events happened near Jammu early in November, which I regret very deeply. The Muslim convoys of evacuees were being taken away from Jammu when they were attacked by non-Muslim refugees and others, and a large number of casualties were inflicted. The troops escorting them did not play a creditable role. I might add that none of our troops were present or had anything to do with this.” (Jawaharlal Nehru, Speeches, VI, Publications Division, Government of India, p 165).

Clearly, a self-contradicting speech by Pandit Nehru after the November 6 massacre of Jammu Muslims in 1947. On the one hand, he concedes the fact of Indian troops escorting Muslim convoys. But on the other, he exonerates them by pleading that they were not present.

The last days of October 1947 and the beginning of November were the most turbulent in Kashmir’s modern history. In this period, various areas of the Jammu province were subjected to large-scale genocide and ethnic cleansing, which reached their climax on November 6. The entire Muslim population of the Jammu city was asked to assemble outside its limits, ostensibly for the state administration to facilitate its migration to Pakistan. Once these unfortunate Muslims entered a specified area, they were subjected to loot, plunder and savage killings.

Two thousand and eight hundred people were left dead on the spot, thousands were injured, while some managed to escape and reach the Pakistani city of Sialkot via Suchetgarh.

The massacre completely transformed the demographic scene of the state in general and of Jammu in particular. The Census of India too attests to the ethnic cleansing of Muslims in the state by depicting its decline from 78 per cent (1941) to 60 percent (1961). Jammu, a district with a forty per cent Muslim population according to the 1941 census, reported only seven percent Muslims in the census of 1961.

These events did not get reported adequately. Still, the genocide, in no way less vicious than the holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis against the Jews, could not escape mention in contemporary discourse.

Ian Stephens, the former editor of *The Statesman* wrote in his *Horned Moon*: “Half a million or so had almost totally disintegrated in the autumn of 1947. About 200,000 simply vanished, being presumably butchered or killed by epidemics and exposure while seeking to get away; the rest had fled into Pakistani Punjab.”

Sheikh Abdullah too conceded the massacre and genocide. True to his reputation, he, however, put the blame on the victims themselves. In his speech at Jammu on November 16 that year, he said: “Jammu Muslims are to a large extent themselves responsible for what has happened to them, because though in a minority, they had, by their words and deeds, let their tongues in favour of Pakistan. But you murdered innocent barbers and washer-men who knew nothing about politics. How unjust it was to kill children and women who did not even know Muslim League or Pakistan.” (P N Bazaz, *The Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, Kashmir Publishing Company, New Delhi 1954 p. 332).

In the words of Prem Nath Bazaz, while the liquidation of Muslims was in operation in all its fury, the Sheikh held the victims responsible for their horrible fate. His only regret was that innocent Gujjars, barbers and vegetable vendors were also killed along with supporters of Pakistan.

Being the emergency administrator, Sheikh Abdullah himself should have shared the responsibility for the holocaust. He however organized a week-long freedom celebration (Jashn-e-Azaadi) in May 1948. (Ram Chandra Guha, *India After Gandhi*, Picador India, 2007, p. 76) While the process of annihilation of the Muslim population was still going on, such a carnival was nothing but a red herring to deflect the attention of the Valley from the ethnic cleansing in Jammu.

Recounting his experience in the disturbed areas of Jammu, G K Reddy, the former editor of the *Kashmir Times*, says he had seen a “mad orgy of violence against unarmed Muslims that should put any self-respecting human being to shame. This included seeing armed bands of ruffians and soldiers shooting down and hacking to pieces helpless Muslim refugees heading towards Pakistan. Watching officials and military officers directed a huge armed mob against a Muslim refugee convoy which was hacked to pieces in the Jammu city. (Christopher Snedden, *Kashmir The Unwritten Story*, Harper Collins, Indian reprint 2013 p. 52-53).

After the Jammu genocide, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru rushed to Srinagar on November 12. In order to keep Kashmiris in good humor, he promised them a plebiscite in his speech at Lal Chowk. Sheikh Abdullah was so mesmerized by Nehru’s presence that he lavished on him a famous couplet from Hazrat Ameer Khusro: *mann tu shudam, tu mann shudi, mann tann shudam, tu jaan shudi; taakas na goyad baad azeen, mann deegaram tu deegari* (I have become you, and you me; I have become the body, you the soul; so that none hereafter may say that “I am someone and you someone else”)

History repeats itself, and at this juncture, it is in process of repeating itself. Members of a community in Jammu are being armed in the name of Village Defense Committees. Most of those who constitute these committees are members of notorious communal organizations.

The security apparatus too remains infected with the communal virus and the fascist ideology of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Killing of innocent civilians in Gool last summer can be a prelude to the repetition of what Jammu experienced in 1947. The Kashmiri leadership has to respond to this situation and make sure that the genocide is not repeated. Negligence or indifference would be nothing but collaboration by omission.

Dr Sheikh Showkat Hussein

<http://kashmirreader.com/11062013-ND-jammu-genocide-recorded-22925.aspx>
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JAMMU

The Forgotten Genocide

NOVEMBER 6, 2012 | AL SHAHEED | 1947, GENOCIDE, JAMMU, MASSACRES | LEAVE A COMMENT

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It is one of the least known genocides in modern history. It was carried out with such a precision that it is difficult to find its traces, except in the memories of the survivors, and the tales of horror they passed on to their next generations. Around 500,000 Muslims were killed with military precision. It was such an operation that language lacks words to express this offence of demolition of human being.

Though the targeted killing had already started in Jammu around mid July 1947, the operation got a fillip immediately after a fleeing Maharaja Hari Singh and his wife reached Jammu on 26 October 1947. An organised carnage was orchestrated to kill Muslims, wherever found or spotted in Jammu.

British daily The London Times quoting its special correspondent in India stated that the Maharaja, under his own supervision, got assassinated 237,000 Muslims, using military forces in the Jammu area. The editor of Statesman, Ian Stephen, in his book Horned Moon writes that till the end of autumn 1947, more than 200,000 Muslims were murdered in one go. Horace Alexander wrote in the Spectator (16 January 1948) that the killings had “the tacit consent of State authority” and put the figure at 200,000.

The Hindu Dogra ruler’s main aim was to change the demographic composition of the region by eliminating the Muslim population. Such was the intensity of carnage that in Jammu province about 123 villages were ‘completely depopulated’. Kathua district ‘lost’ almost fifty per cent of its

Muslim population. Thousands of Gujars were massacred in mohalla Ram Nagar. Village Raipur, within Jammu cantonment area was completely burnt down. The Dogra state troops were at the forefront of attacks on Muslims. The state authorities were also issuing arms not only to local volunteer organizations such as the RSS, but to those in surrounding East Punjab districts such as Gurdaspur.

'The London Times' stated that Hari Singh got 237,000 Muslims assassinated in the Jammu area. The editor of 'Statesman', Ian Stephen, writes that by autumn 1947, more than 200,000 Muslims were murdered in one go. Horace Alexander wrote in the 'Spectator' that the killings had "tacit consent of State authority" and put the figure at 200,000

The state administration had not only demobilised a large number of Muslim soldiers serving in the state army, but Muslim police officers had also been sent home. In the Jammu city, the Muslim military were disarmed and the Jammu cantonment Muslim Brigadier replaced by a Hindu Dogra officer. Muslims seeking refuge in police stations and/or Deputy Commissioners' offices were openly handed over to RSS beasts by the Dogra officers themselves.

Meanwhile, Maharaja of Patiala was not only supplying weapons but also a Brigade of Patiala State troops were operating in Jammu and Kashmir, without whose help and assistance, the objective could not have been achieved with such precision. The Times of London reported the events in Jammu with such a front page headlines: "Elimination of Muslims from Jammu", and pointed out that Maharaja Hari Singh was "in person commanding all the forces" which were ethnically cleansing the Muslims.

That there was a design to change the demographics is evidenced by another well-reported incident. Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mehr Chand Mahajan, upon arrival in Jammu told a delegation of Hindus, which met him in the Palace, that now when the power was being transferred to the people they should better demand parity. When one of the delegation members wanted to know how that was possible, Mahajan, pointing to the Ramnagar natural reserve below, where Muslim corpses were still lying said, "the population ratio too can change" like that ("Elimination of Muslims from Jammu" II, The Times, London, 10 August 1948, page 5. See also Ved Bhasin's interview to Kashmir Life).

Both documentary and oral sources suggest that the crime committed on the Muslims was nothing less than an organized holocaust. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who was appointed "Chief Emergency Administrator" on 30 October 1947 could not prevent the carnage. He writes in his autobiography *Atish-e Chinar* (page 312) that the carnage got impetus after the arrival of Union Home Minister Sardar Patel, Union Defence Minister Baldev Singh along with the maharaja of Patiala, a person known for his anti-Muslim bias, in Jammu. The trio met various Hindu organizations and delegations, after which the massacre attained a great momentum. Hindu fanatics, aided and abetted by government forces, started burning down village after village inhabited by Muslims. Women were raped at will. Weapons were distributed freely to marauders from the Kachi Chawni house of Pandith Prem Nath Dogra and motivated by Balraj Madhok. On 6 November surviving Muslims were told to assemble in an open ground, to be sent to Pakistan, herded in trucks like cattle and killed mercilessly with machine gun fire between the Digiana and Samba belt. Women were abducted and raped. Even the daughter of the legendary Chaudhary Ghulam Abbas was not spared. Many women preferred death than falling prey to the cruel beasts who wouldn't tire calling themselves as secular people.

On the ground, the killing operations were organized, directed and supervised by Maharani Tara Devi in league with her debauch Guru Sat Dev and the governor of Jammu, Chet Ram Chopra. At the politico-administrative level, Sheikh puts the blame solely on the Dogra ruler Hari Singh and Prime Minister Mahajan. At one point of time, Sheikh had even thought of initiating action against the duo for crimes against humanity (Atish-e Chinari, page 331). But why didn't he translate his thoughts into action remains shrouded in mystery. Did he surrender this right before Sardar Patel as quid pro quo for prime ministership which came his way in March 1948? As is generally known, the government of India and the Dogra ruler were only interested in conceding him a limited role in a "Mysore type of government". But later this plan was changed and Sheikh was offered full fledged prime ministership. Or was it a result of coercive pressure applied by Patel on Abdullah to imprison his close relative caught red-handed of theft of valuable jewellery in Maharaja of Indore's (known as Holkars) palace where he was employed?

The other aspect of the carnage was appropriation of properties of Muslims. The Muslim names were immediately erased to conform to new ownership. For instance Urdu Bazar became Rajinder Bazar and Islamia School became Hari Singh High School to conform to the new "ownership". Almost 95 percent of left-over properties which should have in the normal course been taken over by the state government were allowed appropriated by looters and rioters (Daily Telegraph of London dated 12 January 1948).

These properties continue to be under the illegal occupation of looters and their descendants and it is precisely for this reason that the Resettlement Bill faces a stiff opposition in Jammu fearing vacation of such properties under a due process of law. Even Indira Gandhi expressed such fears in Jammu in her 1983 election campaign.

Another incident needs a mention here. When Hindu refugees from Muzaffarabad and surrounding areas reaching Kashmir, desired to be sent to Jammu or Punjab, local Muslims motivated Kashmiri tongawallas (horse-cart drivers) to transport them to Jammu against heavy odds. Initially 22 tongawallas were hired. They were later joined by many others from the Khannabal-Qazigund rural belt. On return all these poor tongawallas numbering around 90 were massacred near Nagrota. Their only fault was that they made Hindu refugees to reach their destinations safely.

What makes this holocaust unique is the complicity of State on the one hand and the exemplary treatment of Kashmiri Muslims to its minorities on the other hand, given the grave provocation of Jammu genocide. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was so disgusted with the carnage that on two occasions (27 November and 25 December, 1947), he made mention of it in following words: "The Hindus and Sikhs of Jammu and those who had gone there from outside (referring to RSS goons from Gurdaspur and surrounding areas) killed Muslims there. Their women have been dishonored. This has not been fully reported in the newspapers. The Maharaja of Kashmir is responsible for what has happened there" (Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, volume 90, page 115 and 298). It is no wonder, then, that when Gandhi was killed by an RSS supported Hindu fanatic, sweets were distributed throughout Jammu in special thalis supplied from the Maharaja's Palace.

But there have been some valiant efforts on the part of a few Hindus also who tried to save the caged Muslims in Jammu those days. The names of Krishen Dev Sethi, Ved Bhasin etc top that list. But such instances have been few and far.

Source: [Kashmir Reader \(http://www.kashmirreader.com/11062012-ND-missing-massacre-in-%E2%80%98history%E2%80%99-6599.aspx\)](http://www.kashmirreader.com/11062012-ND-missing-massacre-in-%E2%80%98history%E2%80%99-6599.aspx)



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